Down Among The Dead Men

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Down Among The Dead Men

by AtticusCrete

Summary

Ch1 There's someone playing the organs, and not in a good way, though they pull out all the stops! Devon Silvestri setting.

Ch 2 what a something, web we weave, when first we something something to deceive?

The summaries? Not getting any better are they?

Welcome to the Dr Plushy Pants AU where there is humour, tenderness, familiar faces, different deaths (squee), and some angst, corresponding fluff, slow burn, and divergences (Franklyn lives!). Watch for tags for each chapter/part. Canon adjacent. Maybe a second cousin twice removed - some events out of sequence.

It spans beyond the three seasons, and starts with 'a terrible name for a Museum', I've written bits from along the timeline. The ending of the whole series is already written. I'm currently going back to fill in the gaps.

And sorry about the titles, I'm rubbish at titles, and summaries, and notes, *shrugs* in my first four weeks of writing I clocked just under 100,000 words, what can I say? Feedback and friendliness gratefully received. I answer all comments, though it can take me a bit of time.

In real life I'm an archaeologist, and have other things I'm supposed to write and read. But I'm always delighted to hang out here...

Be less organ-ised

'Beverly, Listen it's me, Will'

'I know babe, I've got caller ID'

'Oh, good. Look, sorry to call so late. Something bad has happened'

'Will Graham bad? FBI bad? Or tattlecrime bad? And how much bad? And why are you whispering?

'I'm in my bathroom. I don't want to be overheard'

'Will? Why are you calling me from your bathroom. What the fuck is going on?'

'Alana is in the living room, she thinks I'm having an anxiety pee'

'Fuck. What? Oh. And what's an anxiety p.. actually never mind that, why is she in your living room and why are you hiding?'

'She kissed me!'

'No.' Beverly barely breathed the word out. Shit. This had got worse fast. She thought they'd got this little blip on the road to harmonious Hannigram sorted, and by sorted she meant squashed flat.

'Why?'

'She said, and I'm quoting here, she's been reassessing our friendship and thought maybe it was time to put it on a more stable footing'

Jesus wept. 'And what did you say?'

'I think I probably looked like a goldfish, then she kissed me (actually a nice kiss she's a good kisser, she's very kissable but just not the person I want to be kissing). And then I ran. I think she thinks she flustered me'

'No kidding'

'What should I do?'

'Oh bugger. I don't actually know. Play for time. Say you play for one of the other teams (oh, you do that already), say you've given up sex for Advent (oh sorry, isn't that like Lent then? Oh ok. My parents are Buddhist what do I know). Errrm, tell her about Hannibal?' Will squeaks 'ok, not that then. Jeez. Just say you've got a migraine, or something. But get her out of there. Or, say you need to have a meaningful conversation before you put out, then let her talk and make lots of meaningful eye contact, then tell her she's given you lots to think about, and then get her out. Or fake a dog sickness.'

'Ok, the dog thing might work. The conversation idea is good but she's putting out so much energy I'll get swamped and probably agree to sex, a relationship, and three kids before the night is out!'

'Ah, the curse of the empath'

'Thanks for the sympathy Bev. No one could ever call you a sympath you know'

'It's why you love me.'

'Yes. Probably.'

'Ok, text me later.'

Will washes his hands and goes back into the living room. Alana gets up from the sofa and holds out a hand to him. Will gulps.

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Two hours later he's at a crime scene in downtown Baltimore. Five minutes after he got off the call with Bev, just when he was really panicking Jack called him. He has never loved Jack more. Really and truly. It's a mess of a scene, considerately though, it's in a bath tub. Some organs have been removed, rather messily. There's been a bit of an argument about whether it could be the Ripper, Zeller says yes, Will says no.

Back at the lab the argument continues. No, yes, no, yes. Jack is getting bored with the back and forwards. He's got other things to think about right now. Bella, his wife, isn't well. Possibly seriously. She's clearly been reluctant to tell him. And now that he sees it, knows it, he can see all the places round her edges where she's already fading. He tunes back in to the conversation.

'I'm going to ask Lecter to come in and get his opinion.'

The lab stills. Will because, damn! Beverly because Will. Zeller and Jimmy because they know what this means. The four of them smile at Jack. He narrows his eyes, fuckers. They're up to something. And when he finds out what...oh maybe they're worried about the Will/Hannibal thing. Good, let them think he'd forgotten about that..

Whilst they wait for Hannibal they get on with their usual round of blood and gore and databases. Will looks at the board, the timeline, the map of victims, only three so far, not even a pattern really, just a triangulation. A triangulation. A fairly even spacing. He thinks about the victims. Different organs, all major ones, all readily accessible if you didn't mind spreading the ribs, or moving viscera and blood. He wonders if it's just an amateur surgeon, one of those urban myths. He doesn't readily think it through. Just faintly let's it be, as an idea, there, back in the bone arena, ready for another gladiatorial bout with the science team, Jack, and Hannibal. Hannibal.

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When Hannibal arrives, he smiles readily at Will, evidencing no awkwardness that they have arranged to meet in just two days time, ostensibly for a trip to the opera, but possibly, and Will certainly hopes so, for the development of their relationship into the next phase. Ok, let's not beat about the bush, extended metaphor is going to kill him. Fucking. Will is basically thinking about fucking Hannibal Lecter. And he really hopes Hannibal is thinking about that too.

They take a close look at the bodies, Brian taking them through the findings, Will interjecting now and again. Hannibal agrees it's unlikely to be the Ripper, he'd be very surprised if it is. The work is too sloppy. The Ripper has a certain kind of artistry that this killer does not display.

The discussion of the urban legend about organ transplants in backstreet theatres prompts some further reflection. Somehow Beverly gets on to looking at cctv footage of a recent incident where an ambulance drove someone away from a hospital and not towards it. And then it's only a hop, skip and a jump to an underground car park where private ambulances on lease to the city are stored. Go Bev.

Hannibal is fascinated, by the leaps and bounds, by the educational nature of the experience. He mentions it to Will, who is too overwhelmed with sensation and feelings to readily respond. Hannibal lays his hand on his arm and Will looks at it slowly and then smiles. It has a grounding effect. He's going to have to tell Hannibal about Alana. But not right this second. Not at a burgeoning crime scene.

Through the miracle of gps tracking they locate the ambulance stolen by Devon Silvestri. He's still inside, with his current unfortunate experiment. Jack deals with him, in his usual straightforward all up in your grill fashion. Silvestri claims he can't let go, that his patient will die. Fury washes over Jack. Then his own expeditious thinking smiles on him. Hannibal was an ER surgeon. 'Dr. Lecter, your assistance please'.

Hannibal has been standing with Will a little back from the action. Hannibal knows Will wants to say something. He's not quite sure what. Something to do with their coming date? Or something that's happened in the last two days? They spoke on the phone last night, well given the time now, the night before last. It's not uncommon for them to do so. It's reached the point where it's more unusual if they don't. He's concentrating on Will so at first he doesn't realise the urgency in Jack's tone. Then he does. And walks speedily over to the back of the ambulance, Will following.

Hannibal has his hands inside the 'patient'. He's taken off his jacket, rolled up his sleeves, and pulled on latex gloves. He's got a feel for what's happening, and he knows he can hold it. But it's nasty, and he's just very slightly distracted by the fact that Will is standing at the door of the ambulance looking in, watching him. It's a weirdly erotic experience.

Competence is highly attractive. And he's a very competent surgeon. Excellent in fact. And he's probably giving off that vibe right now. He's aware of the curl of attraction he's experiencing, possibly the most inappropriate erection of his career to date, and if this is how he feels, how is Will handling it. He glances at him. Ahh. Like that. He pulls his whole attention back to the person on the gurney in front of him. He has a life to save after all.

Will looks at Hannibal. Even without his empathic ability he'd be magnetised by this sight. With the empathy it's a roiling mix of attraction, desire, hope, longing, and lust, all crackling between him and Hannibal. He takes a step back. Hannibal needs to focus on the guy his hands are in, not the guy he'd like to have his hands on.

A few steps away he finds Bev and slaps her shoulder 'good call',

'yeah.....hey, you told him yet?'

'Nah, thought he should be allowed to save that guy's life first'

she smirks at him. 'He's just sex on legs isn't he?'

'Yeah, and the rest. We're going to the Opera Saturday'

'you didn't mention that before.'

'Telling you now aren't I'

'Nice one. You going to jump his bones?'

'No, I'm going to enjoy a lovely evening of Puccini and then have a light supper..'

'Fuck, do you even like opera?'

'Why does everyone think I have no culture? As it so happens I love opera'

'Wow. Really? Who knew? So, opera, supper, and then jump his bones'

'Beverly, I sincerely hope so'

They both smile. Quite a bit.

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As the crimescene winds down Will finds his way to Hannibal. He doesn't say anything just leans on the bonnet of the car beside him. Standing just very slightly too close for colleagues but not so much that it jumps out. They could lean like this and even Jack would probably think it was just two people who know each other being supportive at the end of a stressful and charged scene. Both of them are sitting with their hands resting on the bonnet lid. Will extends the smallest finger of his hand, and moves it until it just touches Hannibal's little finger. They stay like this for some time. Not saying anything. Feeling the connection.

Eventually one of the techs comes over and wants Will to talk him through something. He gets up. Doesn't say anything to Hannibal and walks away with the guy. Hannibal takes a deep breath and closes his eyes. When he opens them Bev is standing there.

'I'm going to do something very bad. And tell you something I shouldn't tell you. But I'm telling you so that you won't go into a conversation about it cold. Because I have no doubt that when the conversation happens Will is going to get it wrong. And probably piss you off.

He's too stressed at the moment. When he's too stressed he only opens his mouth to change feet. You'll have noticed that? (Hannibal nods) Good, you know what I mean then. When he's like this he also can't usually stop himself. If he manages not to talk that's a miracle in itself. Has he said anything yet that might be annoying?'

'No, we have managed to sit here quite companionably for twenty minutes without the need for any conversation not even a bad or annoying one'

'Twenty minutes? Damn. You're good'

Hannibal smiles at her 'is it enough to warn me that there is likely to be a difficult conversation in the near future, or do you feel the need to elaborate?'

'I'm going to elaborate. Only because I think you really might be pissed. Try not to be pissed at me. And really really, I'm not telling you this to be annoying. I really am telling you for weirdly honest reasons, not to be a manipulative shit. Fuck, now I'm overthinking it'

'Beverly. You are telling me because you care for Will, and by extension for me. You are telling me because you are privy to something that bothers Will. You suspect it will bother me too. You hope to defuse a potentially difficult situation because Will may not handle either the topic or the manner in which he speaks of it very effectively. Is that it?'

'Yeah. That. And because although he didn't say not to say, I don't usually directly repeat what's he's said to me', she does a teeny mental audit 'almost never, really only that one...'

'Beverly?'

'Sorry, ok.'

.....

Much later that night Hannibal is at home sitting up in bed, a book beside him, his glasses resting on top. He has just put the phone down after an intense but ultimately satisfactory conversation with Will. He's intensely glad Beverly told him, he suspects he should get her flowers. He makes a mental note to do so. The conversation had indeed not started auspiciously,

'hey Hannibal, is it too late to call? I'm sorry if it's too late to call. I've got to tell you something bad,'

See if Beverly hadnt warned him his hackles would be up already and he'd be ready for the fight or, well, fight response to kick in, he doesn't usually do, actually that's not true. Where Will is concerned he can imagine it might be flight or freeze rather than fight! Will doesn't stop,

'I didn't mean for it to happen, but Alana came round and she kissed me'

'where?'

'the living room, why?

'I apologise Will, I didn't mean where in your house, I meant to ascertain what kind of kiss'

'oh you know, on the mouth, she is very kissable, it was a nice kiss, but that's not what I mean

And it is right here that Hannibal thanks all his stars that Beverly is the person she is. 'Will, let me ask you this, would you have initiated the kiss, maybe in a quest for stability, for what she represents, for the history you have shared?'

Will goes quiet. 'No. Absolutely not. She doesn't hold that kind of meaning for me. I wouldn't dream of seeing you if even a part of me felt like that for someone else. I take you very seriously Hannibal. No. I wouldn't have kissed her. I didn't kiss her. In fact. I panicked and hid in the bathroom'

Hannibal has to fight not to laugh, Beverly didn't tell him this bit. He calms himself 'the bathroom? And how did Alana respond to this?'

'she doesn't know I phoned Beverly. Don't tell her. She'd be mortified. She thought she was being nice.'

Hannibal is once again glad of Beverly, he is ready to be generous 'I'm sure she did. It is not surprising she finds you attractive. You are quite lovely Will.' He hears a small chuckle at the other end of the line. 'And what did you tell Alana in the end?'

'I managed to say that it was very sweet of her, but that there is someone else, that I was flattered, but, I tried to make sure she could save face. Jack phoned about then so it was kind of ok. She hugged me a bit and then left whilst I put my stuff together'

'And now you have told me the worst, and the worst hasn't happened?'

'I was worried you'd be really annoyed. Or that Alana would mention it first. I think she knows, probably deep down, that it's you, even if she didn't say. She might have, I don't know. Not really meaning to sabotage anything but...'

'something like accidentally telling me she had been at your house for the night and you'd enjoyed a romantic kiss?'

'yeah, when you say it like... I know it sounds stupid'

'not at all Will. I understand. We are both risking something here. At the very least, our hearts, our friendship, and the warmth we share. You are anxious that what we understand between us is still sufficiently tentative that it could go adrift, perhaps with a hard push from an outside force'

Hannibal is sometimes all florid metaphor and elaborate narrative. Will is grateful that this time he is being direct.

'Yeah. Something very like that. This matters to me. I'm trying very hard not to screw it up. I'm usually very good at that so I especially don't want outside assistance in that department. I want this to work.' He takes a deep breath. If Hannibal can be direct so can he 'I'd like it very much'

'As would I. I shall see you tomorrow. Be well, my dear Will'

'You too. Night.' As Will is putting the handset down Hannibal can hear one of the dogs wuffling, and Will speaking gently to it. His heart lights with how Will is, even with no one but the dogs to hear him.

The call has gone well. In particular he admires his own restraint. He has refrained from telling Will that he left the scene only to find a text had arrived at some point during the day when he must have been otherwise occupied. It's from Alana,

'oh Hannibal, what shall I do? I need your advice. Will kissed me. Text me when you get this. I really need your help.

.....

At the lab the next day Team Sassy Science is astounded when Beverly gets the mother of all floral bouquets. There's an envelope, in it is a small card which simply says 'with sincere gratitude, Hannibal Lecter' in the envelope though there is also a print out of a screen shot of Hannibal's cell phone. It's of the text from Alana. Fucking hell. It was a good job she told him even if she broke at least three of her personal rules for life in doing so!

Through a glass, darkly

Chapter Summary

Beverly is The Best, honestly you couldn't make her life up at the moment.

Beverly is sitting in the lab. On the shelf just beside her there is a large and impressive bouquet of flowers. It's her bouquet. From Hannibal. She rather likes his style. Actually she just quite likes him.

Once you get past the three piece suits, ridiculous ostentation, that truly awful Russian hat (she's told Will that if he and the good doctor every actually get it together she wants that hat, she thinks it should end up buried deeply in an evidence locker maybe in Area 51 which of course doesn't exist), and his general Europeaness he's quite funny and very smart. And he likes her.

He also likes Will. She rubs her hands a little. She has worked so hard to make this right for her noodle of a friend, the FBI's answer to, she baulks at a comparison, Sherlock Holmes? Hercule Poirot? Miss Marple? Maybe Miss Marple is the closest. Hmm. Maybe she won't share that with Will, unless it's in front of everyone.

She grins her favourite evil scheming bitch from hell smile. It always makes the boys in the lab nervous.

In with the flowers was a copy of a text from Alana to Hannibal sent during the time when they were dealing with the organ guy. Bev loves Alana, but she's been very very naughty. And Bev is going to call her on it. She's just thinking through her overall strategy.

She's got a choice, she can go for direct frontal attack (bad Alana, get down, sit), she can go for distraction and disarmament (oooh baby, I'll smooch you, let me kiss it better), she could try harsh light of day exposure to reality (can she get Hannibal and Will to pose in matching tuxes tomorrow and snap them snogging? And accidentally group send it?), or she could go for a kind of Socratic dialogue where she gradually elicits from Alana what she's done and can then whip her ass for it?

She kicks her feet back and forwards on the rungs of her stool. Nah. She can't decide. So, if in doubt, coffee.

Down in the cafeteria she catches sight of Will. She hadn't known he was going to be on site today. Ok. She can make this work in her favour. She grabs a large coffee and two cookies. One for her and one for Willikins.

'Hey gorgeous? You alright then?'

'Hey Bev. I didn't think I'd see you today. How are you doing?'

'Great actually. You?'

'Surprisingly I am. I had a good talk with Hannibal on the phone last night. I told him all about the thing with Alana, and he was very sweet and understanding. He was really decent and didn't guilt trip me at all. I thought I'd totally hash it up. But no. God he's just great. I am so looking forwards to..'

'Woah. Too much information Graham. I've already got the general idea thanks. Actually I was going to ask you if you'd talked to Alana?'

'No. not yet. She wants to have lunch today but to be honest I'm a bit reluctant, I'm going to get my haircut, you know for this evening? Make a bit of an effort, and she suggested I meet her after' Beverly wonders if he knows how adorable he looks when he blushes.

'Does she know why you're having your hair cut... oh wait, she doesn't think you're getting it cut for her does she?'

'What! Shit, that hadn't occurred to me. Damn. Oh no. She might, now I think about it.'

'Oh god Will, what did you say?'

'I think I said something about abandoning the homeless look for something more pulled together?'

'Oh.'

'Oh god. I am an idiot. I didn't even think it through'

'Where are you supposed to meet her? Or haven't you got that far?'

'There's a cafe just opposite the, look don't laugh at me but the barber I'm going to is actually Hannibal's usual. I've been there once, when we were going to some wine tasting thing, and Hannibal was fussing about, actually you don't need to know'

'Damn. I love a good barber story!'

'Really? Is that a thing' Beverly just shrugs.

She carries on, slowly at first and then getting faster 'Ok. And I'm thinking on my feet here. How about you get your hair cut, I'll accidentally bump into Alana in the cafe. We'll see you coming out of the barbers and I'll make some comment about how fuckable you look for your date with the doctor.'

'One blip there I can see'

'Yeah? What'

'Be specific about which doctor you're talking about'

'Oh. Yeah. Duh, I could even tease her a bit about it, you know, let her back out of it a bit?'

'This sounds like a great plan!'

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Alana. Thank you for your text message. I'm sorry not to have been able to respond earlier. It sounds as though you are in something of a quandary. Might I suggest we meet for lunch or even coffee? I shall be in the city as I must go and have my hair cut. May I suggest we meet at the cafe near Sweeney Todds at 2pm My appointment is just a little before 1 and Georgio usually takes an hour or so before he is satisfied. Warm regards, Hannibal

Thanks Hannibal, that's so kind of you. I'm actually going to meet a friend near there earlier so that's perfect. I'll see you then. Bye. Alana

hi Will, it'd be lovely to have lunch. Super. And I look forwards to seeing what you've done with your hair. How about around 1pm at Julio's. I'm seeing a friend there later so that'd work well for me. Ok for you? Alana xx

Bev, it's on. Hair cut at 12 meet Alana at 1pm. When will you get there? Will

Bev hi, I'm going to talk to Hannibal about you know what! Wish me luck, were having tea later after his haircut at 2 xx A

alright, maybe 12:30? Give me time to settle in and maybe tell her, ease her in, you know? Alright? Text me if anything goes wrong

Bev looks at her cell phone. There's just one more text she could send. She sighs to herself. Oh well, in for a penny, in for a pound. They better make her best woman or something.

Hannibal, trust me, and don't ask me how I know and don't ask me why but get to your barber's appointment 10 minutes early. In haste. Bev

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Bev is sitting drinking her third cup of double latte ice wash freezer something stupid Christmas macchiato thing. The name is ridiculous and her teeth ache from the sugar. But she's got a fantastic view of the barbers almost opposite. She can just about see Will sitting in a chair next to the big plate glass window that is the shop front. He's been in the seat for nearly an hour. She anticipates that Alana will show up in the next five... oh and here she is now!

'Alana. Wow. How weird is this? I've just seen Will, and now you're here. Amazing!'

Alana smiles at her. 'Actually I'm here to meet Will. We're having lunch. And later I've a meet with another friend.'

Bev grins, 'Excellent, always good to be able to kill two birds with one stone. And now you've met me too!'

'You won't think me rude if I say that I'm hoping for a little private time with Will, will you?'

Bev puts on her very best surprised face, the one that she imagines she'd use if she ever won an oscar or something, 'really, Will? I guess it's harder to get time with him now he's so busy, with, you know' she waggles her eyebrows suggestively.

'Well I don't know about that. I did see him a couple of day's ago. We had a lovely evening.'

'Oh. Right. Oh. Oh. Oh fuck'

'Beverly?'

Beverly is looking over Alana's shoulder onto the street. Will has just come out of the barbers. He's had his hair cut, and had a proper shave. He looks soft, tender, young. And very fuckable. He's not her thing at all but even she can see it. Oh shit. And Alana might think this is all for her. Bugger.

Alana swivels round in her seat, and sees him, she lets out a little gasp. She's about to wave to Will when they can both see that his attention's been grabbed by someone further along the street on their side of the road, behind Bev's shoulder. They both swivel back in that direction, in time to see Hannibal cross the road and walk towards Will. They're both smiling.

'I like that we had the same idea!'

'You look. Divine. Truly beautiful.' Hannibal picks up Will's hand and kisses it. Will laughs. He leans forwards and kisses Hannibal.

Even from where they are sitting Beverly and Alana can see this is more than just two friends giving each other European greeting kisses. Will now has his arms round Hannibal's neck, one hand in his hair and Hannibal has both his hands spread possessivly over Will's back. It's the kind of embrace that would elicit the comment 'geez guys get a room'.

They break apart and do that thing where you're walking in one direction but still looking and talking at someone going in the opposite direction. Bev can hear Will as he calls back, 'ok. Six o'clock then. I won't be late.' Hannibal calls something back, he's on the doorstep of the barber's, opening the door, Will calls again 'yeah. Of course. I picked up your tux too.'

He swivels back towards the cafe and then comes and stands looking out into the street as though waiting for someone, glancing at his watch. Beverly looks at Alana.

Alana looks horrified. 'How, how, how long has... '

Beverly takes pity on her 'Since Will saw him talking to you at the launch of the Evil Minds museum'

'But that's nearly six months ago. And for Hannibal?' Alana almost whispers

'As far as I can tell, about the same'

'Oh. Damn. I'm such a fool. All that time. Why didn't you.. why didn't they sa...? Oh. OH. Will did say, I just wasn't listening. And Hannibal did when he and I had that huge row. And, you did too...?'

'Sorry babe. No easy way to find out. What do you want to do right now?'

'I think I'm going to go out the back. I feel so silly. Look can you talk to Will for me or something? Thank god you were here.'

'Sure. Of course. Let's talk in a day or two?'

'Yes. Of course, bye' Alana goes out to the rear of the cafe and through a door onto a parallel street. She's not looking where's she's going at all. She's not crying but she is flustered. So much so that when she knocks into someone they both drop things. As they pick things up it's clear that the other woman's bottle of wine has broken. Alana insists on replacing it.

In the wine boutique the other woman, dark blonde hair, slender, brown eyes, severe clothes, says 'I know it's not my business, but are you ok?' Alana looks at her. Sometimes confession to a stranger can be helpful, and she's been such an idiot 'I've done something so stupid. Do you really not mind? It would help to talk about it. Let me at least buy you a coffee, I'm Alana.' 'Margot, pleased to meet you, even in the circumstances.' She smiles. Alana smiles back.

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Beverly knocks on the window of the cafe, Will hears and turns round and waves at her. He comes into the cafe and sits in Alana's now vacated seat.

'So. What do we do. Alana's not here'

'She's not now. She was here five minutes ago when you and Dr Plushy Pants did your porno turn in the middle of the road'

'Oh. Oh dear.'

'Nahhh. You're alright. Actually it might have been the best way for her to find out. She didn't lose face or have to talk to either you or Hannibal about it'

'Oh. Yes. I suppose so. Bit sad for her'

'Oh Will. She did not behave quite as perfectly over this as you might think.'

'Really? Are you going to tell me?'

'Probably not. It won't help, and it might hurt. Now tell me, what did the delectable doctor say to you whilst you were checking out his tonsils with your tongue?'

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